

graduated from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and his doctor of divinity degree from the Virginia Seminary. Since 1984, Reverend Johnson has served as the pastor at the Truevine Missionary Baptist Church.

Reverend Johnson has held various positions in the Mt. Olive Baptist Church and the Sweet Pilgrim Baptist Church. He has also led and been a member of many civic and religious organizations. Currently, he is the chaplain for the University of South Alabama Medical Center. He is truly a leader in our community and deserves recognition for all of his many achievements.

On Sunday, July 13, 2006, Reverend Johnson will be recognized for his 24 years of service to the Truevine Missionary Baptist Church. He and his wife, Gloria, are the proud parents of three wonderful children—a son, Private First Class Howard Johnson II; and two daughters, Zsaquez RaShaunn and Geiselle LaVonne. Private Johnson was America's first casualty in the war in Iraq. Tragically, Private Johnson's supply convoy was ambushed in the early days of the campaign in the Iraqi city of Nasiriyah. Private Johnson remains a hero not only to his family and friends but to a grateful nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Reverend Johnson on this special day and this remarkable achievement. Unfortunately, a prior engagement out of town will prevent me from joining Reverend Johnson and his family and friends as they celebrate this milestone. I know his lovely wife, Gloria, his family and his many friends join with me in praising his accomplishments and extending thanks to the Good Lord for Reverend Johnson's exemplary service over the years to the congregation of Truevine Missionary Baptist Church.

WELCOMING THE INTERNATIONAL SHIPHOLDING CORPORATION TO SOUTHWEST ALABAMA

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and welcome the International Shipholding Corporation to the port city of Mobile, Alabama.

For six decades, the International Shipholding Corporation has been an institution in the port of New Orleans.

Unfortunately, following Hurricane Katrina, restrictions regarding the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet were placed on the shipping industry, creating a financial burden on the corporation and similar companies. After much deliberation, International Shipholding Corporation decided to move its corporate headquarters and operations of its subsidiary CG Railway Incorporated, to the port of Mobile.

When the corporation takes up residence in Mobile in early 2007, it will bring 150 jobs to the area and more than 80 related jobs in the local maritime community. The move is also expected to increase ship traffic at the Alabama State Docks by about 9 percent. Moreover, we will be proud to have International Shipholding as the only corporation in Mobile to be publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange.

While I know the men and women of the International Shipholding Corporation are saddened to leave their roots in southern Louisiana, I sincerely hope they find that the hospitality of the people of Mobile and southwest Alabama will help to make their transition easier.

I rise today on behalf of the people of Mobile and the First District of Alabama to welcome the newest member of our corporate family, the International Shipholding Corporation.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL BENJAMIN STEPHENSON

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Colonel Benjamin Stephenson House in Edwardsville. This Sunday, July 2nd marks the dedication of Stephenson House and the completion of a successful community effort to reopen her doors to the public. The House is 186 years old.

The Stephenson House is on the National Register of Historic Places and is considered to be the oldest brick home in the county. The House was also a gathering place for many of Illinois' early political leaders. Benjamin Stephenson came to the Illinois Territory in 1809 where he was appointed the first sheriff of Randolph County. During the War of 1812 he attained the rank of Colonel. Stephenson also served in Congress as a representative from the Illinois Territory from 1814–1816.

Edwardsville's Historic Preservation Committee learned in 1998 that they succeeded in receiving a grant to restore the historic House. Since that time, it has been a community effort to complete the restoration. The House is now restored and furnished as it would have been in 1820, allowing visitors to learn about Illinois in its earliest days. Visitors to the House are given a tour by volunteers who dress in period costumes, giving a glimpse into 19th century life in Edwardsville.

It is my pleasure to congratulate the Stephenson House on her dedication. I wish the volunteers and staff at the Stephenson House all the best in the years to come.

PATRICK DURANTE

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, one of the best known and admired political figures in suburban Chicago is Patrick Durante of Addison, Illinois. One of the most influential local newspapers FRA NOI recently published a commentary by Leonard Amara about Pat that is worth reading and portions of it follow:

POLITICAL UPDATE

For many years, folks from our ethnic community have demonstrated leadership in many Illinois counties. This month, we highlight the career of the highly regarded Patrick Durante. Serving as Chairman of the Addison Township Republican Organization

since 1974, this is the longest term to date for a Republican township chairman from DuPage County's Republican Party.

Born in 1940, Pat's political life started in 1964 at the age of 24, as a member of the Young Republicans. He went on to serve as Addison Township YR president, DuPage County YR vice chairman, and Illinois state YR executive director. During the course of his township chairmanship, he also served as the Illinois 6th District State Central Committeeman for 9 years. This early success demonstrated Pat Durante's interest in improving his community by suggesting its agenda and taking a leadership role.

Franco Caladiapietro, a candidate for the Illinois House in the 45th District, says of his mentor: "I'm involved in the political process because of people like Pat Durante. Pat, along with Hank Gianvecchio, Ed Levato and others of Bloomingdale Township, are my role models as to what politicians should stand for, what we should aspire to be."

For Pat, as an Italian American in the early 1960s, breaking into the German/Irish/English Republican establishment in DuPage County was no easy task. There were only about a half dozen Italian Americans in the DuPage County Republican Party back then, and arguably our president wasn't well received. Having to endure the "usual Mafia, Dago barbs that were constantly spoken behind our backs," according to Pat, he takes great pride in knowing that he helped open doors, because today there are hundreds of Italian Americans in various positions throughout the DuPage County Republican Party.

Although Durante has been part of dozens of campaign staffs, and has personally run dozens of campaigns, his fondest memories include being a deputy state chairman for President Ronald Reagan; coordinator for Jim (Stringini) Ryan, Illinois attorney general and candidate for governor; and, most of all, serving as executive assistant to Congressman Henry Hyde.

In 1963, now-deceased Elmwood Park Village President Elmer Conti urged Durante to get involved in politics. Conti was also instrumental in getting Henry Hyde to run for Congress in 1974. Pat has always held that, if ever there is a non-Italian to whom Italian Americans owe a large debt, it is Hyde.

Pat's family lived on Peoria Street in the Taylor Street neighborhood. Angelo Durante, his paternal grandfather, came to America in 1901 from Laurino, Avellini, Italy, and opened up newspaper stands to make a living for his son James (Patrick's father), and his six daughters. His wife, who was a Gregorio, was also from Laurino.

His maternal grandfather, John Bertelotti came here from Stazzema, Italy, in 1911, along with his wife and two daughters, Josephine (Patrick's mother) and Corrinne. He opened John's Grocery Store at Flournoy and Loomis and became prominent in the Chicago Italian-American Chamber of Commerce.

Early in his professional life, Pat scraped up enough money to buy a house in Itasca, where he raised two wonderful children, Lori Ann and Vincent. Pat and his present wife, Kathie Cermak-Durante, currently reside in Addison. Vince and his lovely wife Katie live in Bartlett and recently presented Pat with life's greatest reward, a grandson, Nicholas. Though Pat's parents passed away, they left him with many inspirational traits, the most compelling of which are his pride in being an Italian American and a passion for politics.

His future plans are to stay with Congressman Hyde until he concludes his term at the end of 2006. He will stay on as Addison Township chairman for a few more terms if his fellow Republicans allow him, and he will be involved in campaigns for governor, congressman and a few others. He will continue to